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EDITORIAL

When the literary history of the war years comes to be written in two or three centuries—our ripe scholars will be unable to tackle it in less—it will be remarked that as the end drew closer and life became harder, crueller and the effects of shortage, monotony and weariness began to tell on the inhabitants of this country the little reviews, anthologies, literary collections increased in number and their quality became higher. We welcome to our ranks still another of these, *The Windmill*, edited by Reginald Moore and Edward Lane and published by Messrs. Heinemann. The spirit which did not succumb to continuous bombing and the horror of living among the ruins of a civilization, was putting out its green leaves from the battle-scarred stump of the still living tree.

It is disturbing, however, as we end our fifth year to look around us and to see the same sordid picture of ignorance, corruption, and collusion, editors of reputable periodicals printing verse as a fill-up of blank space who have no qualifications for choosing poetry at all, and literary editors who give books of poems to reviewers who are themselves failures as poets, and who merely use the space at their disposal to project their own sense of frustration into their silly remarks, or, which is perhaps more an act of prostitution, lending their pens to please influential persons in the rival literary gangs. The little reviews are free of this blight. They are compiled by people who are genuinely interested in getting the best material into print. To them goes the honour of maintaining the vitality of our greatest spiritual asset, the flame of our truth, our poetry.

ERNST SIGLER

The View from the Castle

FOR G. E.

Summer's end: slumping mist rolling in from the sea.
Peace comes as slowly as this, and to each man
watching tensed from the paradox of the castle
the scared retirement of the sun
behind the alp-dream of his dead eyes,
peace comes like this ectoplasm from the sea.

A word or a silence is enough. From below
music vibrates, brings into focus,
shrill as light on a mirror at first,
the twisted excitement of the dolls
on the green. Halts in mid-air. And only
a trembling and the jerky incongruous specks
approach us: the end of a day, our tomorrow
an ending. A word or a silence is enough:
Morgen tanzen wir auch?—these, saved from a drab death
into this fold of life, now their eyes and grey tunics
are old as the stones of the parapet:
live youth, saved for tomorrow, knowing no end,
not living towards an ending.

The sea is no longer visible.

One standing aside: let him be
a symbol of this insurmountable day.
Nights, unashamed, he often weeps;
taking his life-day to the microscope
he sees within it this much of eternity:

the eidolons projecting from a valley,
rock for a castle, brown twilight for old enmity,
rock for a shield, and Radamanthus
scrawling above the green and the sun's loss
here grey in grey a dead man's history.

And once he watched a crowd of pilgrims go
through yellow fields towards a simple sea,

lay shielded by a fluorescent hill
that clothed their prayers like a shawl.
But from the hill flowed Lethe, drowning such a day.

Now hear the minstrel as he sings the lay:
O in the night the field hides grey
Low in the night mist scares my luck.
One standing aside on the omnipotent rock,
paying his tithe to the punitive day.

The sea is no longer visible: the mist
has laid on our eyes a soothing crust;
the dancers recede and there comes a stillness
assumes the outsize of everyman's loss.
A word is enough: of an elusive death
whose hundred shells examined hundred yards:
then he resigned but for his rushing heard
in every stone, in every stone his breath.
The feria continues. And mourning, my castle
sings softly into the wearying day:
Why do you wait? Lynkeus, sightless your pinnacle
towers above you: the fire is dead and its glow
no mirror can show to your valley: why do you wait?
Only for blessings of the night?

Flippant and false: the poet's traditional out.
Thy heart shall break, thy heart shall break—and in place
of the equipoise of history recording
its measure of truth, so no-one will
forget or know, he is the minnesinger
of vacuity, the draper of sackcloth and lace.
But from this pinnacle
below strangling heights built back upon the hate
of the earth, the millenia of rock are concluded
in the shuffling specks on the green
which yet he cannot reach, which he shall never reach.
That morning a boy, trying to please him,
spoke of one dead these hundred years,
how his songs could not ever be banished:
that one died with his eyes on a fly.

JOHN SINGER

The Dead

For us no shadow, we do not know the wind,
being the wind; grief will not employ
bone's changing rancour, and for us no sea-voice,
being the sea, being the meeting of grief and joy.

We are in chaos; we do not know the sun,
being the sun, we do not thirst for peace,
being peace, we do not dance with fever,
being dance, being fever, being chaos and peace.

For us no conflict, no ripeness and decay,
nor flowering, we are hugely impersonal,
we are beyond power and more powerful
than you, being all these things without movement.

Nor kiss of bible nor the silk of faith,
nor the passionately rational nor irrational logic;
being bible, being faith and lack of faith,
being passion and calm, being action and reaction.

For us no Heaven, being without hope,
being hope, for us no Purgatory,
being fear itself; for us no hope or fear,
being hope, being fear, being centre.

For us no ending and for us no love,
Oh you who mourn, and only for yourselves;
we do not pause to hear Creation's heart;
being Creation, being heart, being love, being ending and
beginning.

As if Known in Forgetting

As if shaped, quick, tender and separate
(Oh turn of wrist, oh act)
As if breathing, giddy with laughter, volatile
With face, head, heart, hands, agony to come,
As if with joy to scatter.

Piercing the exact hollow ringing waiting shell
Of more than indecision with a certainty
Of being; clay, paint, word, note, structure, song.
(Through bark to wood, sap, rings of root in time)
As if more than painter, canvas, seer and decay.

Taut with guile, woven and weaving, tangible
With hewn and aching limitation.
The statuette, statement before the word,
The song, freedom before the credo,
The singing line, the dream that spouts the shape.

As if the naked shadow of a hard moving core,
Beyond love-words, hope-words, grief-words, need-words;
The unuttered, the unspoken, the golden, the cherished, the always
known;
As if return.
Oh as if return through the fire and the grief and the thunder,
The leap and lightning of the heart, the wound of deeds,
To source and centre, the silence and the endless pealing.

JOHN BAYLISS

Saturn in Aquarius

In a dead Season, barricaded with thorn,
with the cold winds alternating and stars to the South
as cold to the mind as the stars to the North,
with the birds still absent, the tennis court a ruin,
the houses weatherbeaten and draughty trains
coughing their way through the cold dark stations,—
how shall the poet anticipate Spring?

Rather speak of earth and the men that lie under it,
or the water's grey fastness, the stench of oil
with the bomber ten feet in and its crew in Heaven.
How many in Heaven have earned their wings?

Death comes easily by land or water.
A Viking ship rides high above the rock.
Did never a Norseman die for Helen
in the far South with a rose against his mouth
as these have died for a freedom we forget?
Did never a poet see Troy in the air
burning above the clouds at sunset?

It is a rare pleasure, though the air is treacherous,
to look for the gods as the night comes on
and the moon spreads out their beds of cloud.
Paris and Helen to the lonely airman
offer to make their pleasure his shroud—
the mind plays tricks without oxygen,—
and ice lies thick on the wings in the wind
and engines fall faster than Icarus
if they lose the control of their master;
and a wreck is accounted no sacrifice.

So run the images together:
fragments of dream and symbolic dross.
Only this is real, the snow by the wall,
the trees that stand in their formal dress
black as the blameless undertaker.
('I cannot bury him, madam, for less.')

These, and the echo of the river lees,
dregs of the couples who lay there last Summer
and bruised the grass with their love-making.
How many of these look forward to Spring?

It is the time of ice and the time of loss,
the hour of the counting-house but not of the knave
who for stolen hearts is now called to reckoning
by masters who traffic in bodies and souls;—
the time of the world and its hard disasters.
And here, where the sleet and the North wind scold
the scaffolding of this lonely tower
where the lights control the dangerous air
and the blur of a friendly phrase is called
asking for help from the cold and cloud,
standing above them, against the storm,
I see misfortunes and great mistakes
in their perspective and hope to live
longer then these and their consequences.
For life, however beset with pain
sharp as a pine needle or blades that grind
and grit and sparkle upon the wheel,
is the only way that the mind will get
to test its hopes of a final haven
and though the way is through suffering
what man has never had hopes of heaven?

A child may be wiser in its belief
that enchanted heroes can conquer death
for we, whose wisdom is based on doubt,
find false delight in the passing rose
and dwell in Memory's haunted house.

Therefore let midnight come and the clock
hammer the hour, and the negro drum
stab and jabber among the dancers
as guns now deafen the dolls of war,
and let the wind on the concrete tower
howl as it will at the window-pane,
for these are mere noisy echoes that bring
their menace only to those that fear
and pride should scatter their cynosure;

and over the quarry and common shall ring
the bells of freedom before I die
and by the river the crocus vie
'with the daffodil in the winds of Spring.

MAURICE LINDSAY

The Paper Frame

FOR JOYCE

How many dreams desert as we grow older
and leave half-willing smiles to keep their ghosts?
How many visions slip behind the shoulder,
let softer answers echo back the toasts?

The fairy-tales, the giants and the candles
that brightly splutter on the birthday cakes
gild disappointment's edge with sugar handles,
bid laughter decorate time's dreary fakes.

But fairy-tales grow into moral fable,
the icing runs beneath the candle flame.
Love throws each luckless hand upon the table
and stakes his life upon one final game.

So lady, whom I never dared to hope for,
the cards are gathered up and put away.
The glancing ace of hearts jigged through with honour
and capped the gentle logic of my play.

Now I have turned the page upon illusion
and put aside the dragon and the knight
who coloured tumbling hopes with gold confusion
and sighed disaster over all my sight.

Where once the picture showed a fairy princess,
the theory in the book, a hero's claim,
I look on you, a different enchantress
who will not stay within the paper frame.

NICHOLAS MOORE

Mr. Actophil and the Green Geranium

I

He walks upon a tightrope of desires,
As who should say 'The morn is bright with flowers.'
His presence hums with plucked and green guitars;
O who would say this monstrous man is ours?

He ties his blue cravat, sparkled with stars,
Yellow and golden, planets, comets, fires
That light the greenness of his eyes. His ears
Perform to music of celestial spheres.

This wisher, wanter, and encomium,
This high-stepper, this mountain-man, this limb
Of history, O we must bow before him.
His beauty greets the dawn with ha and hum.

How brightly shine the gay lights of our dream,
Spicked and spanned in the glitter of his form.

II

It is the truest form of poetry.
His eye is glib, his fingers never still.
See how the cat rests on the window-sill,
No less determined to be smooth than he.

What bright gardenia glistens in his coat!
What scent of roses dreams upon his lips!
How fierce and formal are his fingertips!
How green with beauty is his stretching throat!

It is not true. This gloating hemisphere
Turns not for him, but to our own desires.
Yet he is always filled with fictive fires,
Brighter than night, our douce and ever-dear,

Our purple clown, handsome Aladdin, he
Whose magic hand turns Time to bravery.

III

O truer form than truest poetry!
See how the globe which turns beneath his fingers
Whistles and cries; breasts curve in active languors
Under his touch and each fruit-bearing country

Trembles with sweet inducement. It is fine
To feel his mouth luxurious on the nipple.
Here we have fruit, the magic, juicy apple.
The wind is scented with the lofty pine.

As shadows dapple the green landscape we
Watch the dear sun its darting rays decline:
She turns to him. 'The world is breathless, mine.
A humming sphere sings deathless harmony.'

Fragments of conversation seek the ear.
How fine to be a clown like this one here!

IV

Sex has the bad aroma of male cats!
What goddess is it who like wrath awaits
Upon our doorstep? Fouling on the mats,
Sick on the lawn—the wan heart celebrates

O infinite ecstasy. Feline, she sits
Beside the velvet curtain, rich and red,
Or curled triumphant on the peach-bloom bed.
Doomed, we await the final fevered fits.

Poetry? It is the poetry of glooms,
The odour of the dank, the dark, the drear.
And in the dark the howls of infant fear;
Musty the masters in the secret rooms.

A gun shrieks in the night, blindly explosive;
And man's exploring voice becomes expressive.

V

It is too dark, too dull. All the excitement
Of bands and dancers, saxophones and feet
Provides for us no real enlightenment
We are too angry. We are too discreet.

Behold the night, the lofty sailing moon,
How like a barque careening in the blue!
The tightrope walker turns to look at you,
His effervescent eyes will greet you soon.

Then the tall man will touch you on the back,
And down the naked bone the thrill will slide.
Death shivers, and the earth will seem to crack.
Below you rocks enormously divide.

And there you see between the opened walls
The distinctive man, the hero who appals.

VI

Mr. Actophil presides beside the bars.
The waft guitars are soft beside the green
Geraniums. He hums. The fiercest flowers
Bloom in the purple lights, and seem obscene.

Between the petals dance the fairy children,
All dressed in white, ignited by the music.
You turn, too dizzy to behold the quick
Drinks on the counter or the barely-hidden

Boredom that lounges, like a cigarette
Beside the arboreal marbles, and the cold
Nakedness of those ancient Greeks, so bold
And so impossible for us to get.

The attitude is one you never know:
It is the smooth deceit that hurts you so.

VII

He has a green glass in his ghost-white hand.
The liquor broods upon his furry tongue.
Smoothly you turn to him. 'Is something wrong?
The heart is more ecstatic than the mind . . .'

'Of course, my dear.' Time is a conjuror
Who holds above you, branching all the time,
An olive branch, engraved with vivid fear:
'What is the impulse drives this man to crime?'

You see the room studded with criminal eyes;
Each way you look you see the seely grin
Of active mania. There is no surprise
In this. 'There is no mortal peace from sin . . .'

Yet how you wish that curved and brooding chair
Could hold you always safe from dry despair.

VIII

'Open a conversation in this way,
My dear, I wish I could. I feel the Greek
Ideal is all we can obey. How weak
We feel before this pale and dubious day . . .'

'But we are not statues. Look at that blue
Woman. How devastating! See her lips
Curl on that glassy edge. Her fingertips
Are white, her lipstick blue. The time is true.'

'That is eclectic. Visions always are.
It's not the heart. It's not the mind at all . . .'
'But statues are so cold. They cannot fall . . .
Their permanence is easy. O my star . . .'

'But you are positively classical
Yourself.' 'I'm the illusion; you're the fool.'

IX

The old man stands upon the banister
With saddest eyes. It seems he stands in air,
Sadly, watching his son. 'A love of her
Is hopeless . . .' he begins, but in despair

His hands clutch, and his feet fall on the stair
With a muffled thud. The young man's eyes are bright
As though with dope. His silence is too fair
A means of waging battle. This is night.

The purple shadows fall; over the wall
The wry moon leans, and wanly smiles. The theme
Elongates with the shadows. 'For your dream
I pity you. . . .' His eyes falter, and fall.

The old man trembles and the young man smiles,
Innocent of the worst that Time despoils.

X

The flower breathes; its thickly scented leaves
Turn in the moonlight. The guitar goes ping.
There is a shadow over everything.
The heart has seen this man, and disbelieves.

O Mr. Actophil, the night is young!
The dew will greet the morning swift with flowers!
How golden is the beam of day! To sing
Of this most ancient poetry—the fears

Are held in sonnets of desire, are turned
To beauty, and the able sky is full
Of undisturbéd angels. O the fool
Not to be grateful at the truth we learned!

Ingratitude pores on the brilliant day,
So green, so green. We dream of what we may. . . .

E. J. WYNTER

Comfrey

Wind plays a scale across the borage bells,
But in the empty shells of garden snails
Finds a bare rudiment of sound, a deaf man's cochlea,
Murmurs of blood or wind
Drowned in the thick flesh of earth, or gristle round the ear.

A shell-lip's lisp along the gravel might
From the Ammonite comb out Aeolius' song.
Yet mute as seeds listens its coil of concrete cells,
Seized up in the dead leaves,
Embryo of music; of ram's-horn racemes carved in borage bells.

EITHNE WILKINS

Passage of an August

In solitary august, like a story
he met grief's lassie with the quartz-bright hands;
and she became his darling,
who was young, was sorry
there among the grasses blowing over pit and brands.

She walked beside him back the way he came,
into the whitening hills, and cut his throat.
Although she called him by another name,
she was no stranger, love. And none can drive her out.

ARNOLD RATTENBURY

The Poet's Head

Songs will step along the long winding
roads bedded in his head; and they
will come to the cliff, the double row of armour
that is teeth and the dead-end that's a tongue,
come to the poet's mouth. A high dive
on to paper or bullseye at a mike
is needed here, may frighten him. Nine
in ten will turn, go invert, charging back
among the passages barging the young
and hopeful ones just started, starting a panic.

In this way words, beautiful words, will sometimes
tremble on a lover's lip so
that he turns and bores his darling with a plain
'Darling, you're wonderful; o love, turn over'.

And then, after much practice, after the carefree
precedent of odd ones (born, perhaps,
while he was drunk) they will come evenly.
Some may march—a safe bet, betting a march
will be the commoner daily order still.
Or some may be quite childish, come at a tango
or foxtrot, in cartwheels even, playing tig.
But, free or formal, they will all come simply,
take their header with bravado, make,
freestyle or not, the same ripples on impact.

Then a lover's lip says 'Darling, this is,
this is everything' reciting one
of these that are still little children and chuckle
in back alleys, still in the poet's head.

GLORIA KOMAI

Poem

The now is crystallized: take, give and feel,
Intensity in flower: as a bee
Drunken, or as a moth in love with light,
Only to shrivel in the candleflame.
(But who knows in what ecstasy it dies?
To know—that is the moth's reality.)

Swallow in flight, cold North to Africa,
Whipped by the wind, is not your truth the sun
Warm on your wings? Storm magnifies your South.

Level the land beneath your feet, how breathe
The mountain air? Climb to the positive,
The topmost peak of being. Bruised your limbs
And broken, there are mountains in your heart.

JOYCE T. ROWE

Song

I am the dream and I am the possessing,
  the Eldorado in a waste of woe,
the riddle that you guess yet keeps you guessing,
  the voice in silent hills where no men go.
You seek me in the bluebell mists of springtime
  and on the level plains where steel-black birds
keep a perpetual and crescendoed wing-time
  with songs of purpose set with deeds, not words.
I have no home but peace is yours for taking
  and laughter in a world of light and sound;
I am the dream you knew and lost on waking,
  I am the love you sought and never found.

D. C. EASTWOOD

The Bell and the Tower

TO O.F. KILLED IN ACTION

Time is a passing bell that
tolls and tolls
The ephemeral moment in the
Tower of Now;
Tolls for all lovely things
that flower and fade
As voices at evening die
on darkening air.

Time tolls and tolls
The darling buds of May and
the heart's loves,
The bird whose wings the
dawn has dipped in light,
And soon that dawn and light
and the flyer fallen,
The heart itself grown cold
And the beauty stolen.

Oh hear the sorrow for what's
past and past;
For the lovely young who died
before they knew
Why their brief candles had
been lighted up;
For the leaves fallen in the
world's cold wood,
For the body fallen by bomb,
torture and shell fire,
Or simply for food,
Simply for food.

Oh hear the tolling for the
flower faded,
The hawthorn over,
The Floure de luce dead
in the moist medowes,

The Golden floure of Peru
and the Day Lillie,
Soone ripe, soone rotten, stinking
by the night.
Oh hear the sorrow for the
lovers parted,
Oh hear the tolling for the
loved house desolated,
The dear wood blackened
and the bird's flight.

Hear too the dreadful tolling
for the hope
That died at night time with
the quick Day Lillies;
And for the dew;
And joy in the green-leaved
morning;
And for the turquoise butterfly
the child killed
At noon, not caring;
Hear too the tolling for the
singing, the singing.

But know, you lovers who part
in the dark, obliterating fog of sorrow,
Know you visions, you dreamers,
You mothers who weep at
evening for your dead,
Know, you who break from your bodies
In terror, agony or hunger,
You who lament the spring
leaves and the Golden floure,
You who mourn the lost home,
The butterfly and the child,
Know; be comforted;
For with these shadows
Now builds the invulnerable
Tower.

LOUIS ADEANE

To Woman

Yours is perhaps that face the hero dreamed
Just before sleep immortalized his day,
The angel grief whose easy welcome seemed
To compass him toward the point where lay
—Hub of his life and legend of the world–
The golden flower in a metal land.

Face bud and flower in a petal furled
You draw me also into dreaming night,
And signs and monsters of my fear are veiled
And I the hoping hero leave the light:
Gently my glory, gently do you lead
To morning's images, to sunlight in my hand.

Yet tears of crystal in the amber seed,
The mirrored bats, the statues by the lake
Tell through my fortune like a suicide,
You are that yesterday to which I wake,
Time's waiting angel with your traveller's joy,
The huge and possible: the eggshell toy
Twisting like sea the endless yellow sand.

MUSIC AND POETRY

Opportunity is provided for the appreciation of music and poetry under unusually favourable and intimate conditions at the Ethical Church Hall, 4A, Inverness Place, Queen's Way, Bayswater, on the third Monday of every month. Tea, 6 p.m.; music and poetry, 6.45 p.m.

On January 18th, Wrey Gardiner, Sylvia Read (Fred Marnau's poems), and George Sims will read. On February 19th, Alex Comfort is arranging a contemporary French programme. On March 19th, Herbert Palmer and Francis King will read, and excerpts will be given from Rex Warner's *Medea*. Everyone is welcome.

Poets desiring to read their own work at subsequent meetings should apply as soon as possible to Alec Craig, 59, Oakwood Road, Bricket Wood, St. Albans.

MR. ELIOT'S MUSIC

The end of a millenium which the next generation will witness gives a major work of art of our century a peculiar significance. More than ever we are becoming aware of the motion of time, we hear the thundering breakwaters, the years seem to fall (not circle) and more than our own life seems to come to an end. We have become the deceived slaves of our illusion. Time no longer serves us—we serve time. Accepting the finite condition of time we have come to accepting the end. Living this side of the turning point of our illusion we have a feeling of the end more than of a beginning. A feeling which penetrates our souls and bones and directs our thoughts and actions. We are in the position of people who have to clear out of a house by next term and who, instead of throwing all the rubbish out which they cannot take with them, instead of letting water and air in, quarrel and finally expel each other, beat each other, murder each other, exile the father and make the uncle landlord, forgetting for a moment that uncle, mother, lover and son, all have to go—for there are no more means to pay the rent. The means by which men live have gone! This may very well be the reason why contemporary man in his innermost heart welcomes that end of a millenium. Like a cold water pool stretches the next century of the proletarian future, the dynamited earth, the Weltuntergang. We are very reluctant to plunge into that pool. It is so comfortable this side in spite of wars, mass starvations, failing revolutions. We may soon have central heated streets, snow in summer, and if the negro rhythms are the funeral songs of white man—they are his dance music, too. Some of the kings of old time are still with us, even the Pope in Rome!

There is a great weariness, not of the body, but of the soul. Heroic acts of war are committed by men whose spirit had accepted slavery. It is not the danger to life that threatens mankind. Physical life flourishes on blood and slavery, but it does so at the expense of the spiritual values by which man differs from the beast. In reality we do not belong to the past or to the future, but we are of a present in which man has life and meaning.

. . . consider the future
And the past with an equal mind.
At the moment which is not of action or inaction
You can receive this: "on whatever sphere of being
The mind of a man may be intent

At the time of death"—that is the one action
(And the time of death is every moment)
Which should fructify in the lives of others:
And do not think of the fruit of action.
Fare forward.'

So much for the end in the sense of a popular metaphysics which the above quotation exposes completely. However, we have come to suffer both a breakdown of the soul and a breakdown of spiritual values. We find ourselves deprived of everything that matters most, and with unconscious terror see the quicksand disappearance of the last our mind was still able to hold. It is a strange phenomenon that the illusory ending of a historical time unit has coincided with the loss of such values and their replacement by organizations of a lower order. Certain expectations, curiosity, doubts and interest concerning the future must however be regarded as signs of vitality existing within us which may result in a revival of our faith and free us of some of the mental crutches carrying us against our real intentions.

Of the Four Quartets, 'Burnt Norton' is the first of a sequence of poems which together represent a masterpiece in the sense that it strains the limits of what our time will allow for a work of art. It is poetry neither of a reactionary nor a revolutionary kind—to use present day political slang; the poet is neither a Roman nor a Greek, neither Christian nor pagan, but rather both. His meditations arise from the real needs and problems of contemporary men, that is, they attempt to regain those values they have lost. Eliot declines to give a message, but admits hints as to the possibilities of finding our lost power of feeling and our real self again. We must overcome the hindrances presented by our superstitions and fancies in order to enter reality.

'What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.'

Perhaps Eliot has a classicist end in mind, but his means are purely romantic. His brilliant analytic performance, his anatomy of historical time, his severance of the hardened relationship between ourselves and time restores a grace and freedom to our movements which we had hardly known. It is the means we are concerned with—because the end expresses itself in the means. Our senses which we

have systematically deprived of their disturbing sharpness are the first to receive shocks that will prepare for

> '*The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,*
> *And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses*
> *Had the look of flowers that are looked at.*'

Unheard music, unseen eyebeams of 'guests, accepted and accepting'. Movement of the seen and unseen 'in a formal pattern', in unheard-of unity. Water out of sunlight reflecting the quietly rising lotus fills the emptiness with expectation. The dry pool, 'dry concrete, brown edged', is suddenly illuminated. A cloud passes and the pool is empty again.

> '. . . *human kind*
> *Cannot bear very much reality.*'

The experience of reality does not happen in time, for time has no reality. But if time has no reality, how can there be a point, a still point? It is with time that we measure space. Space, then, is another illusion. Eliot says: neither-nor: neither arrest nor movement. The still point cannot be fixed. 'I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.' We have to accept this or there would be no history. There would be no dance, but 'there is only the dance' between heaven and damnation 'which flesh cannot endure'. Here Eliot hints at the word *Erhebung*, which is neither motion nor stillness. From the still point of the turning world we are guided by the poet to the place of disaffection, of pseudo-reality, where the 'common life' of unconsciousness takes place. We find the words neither-nor again. We are brought into the centre. Our eyes have learned to penetrate the cloud and see the skeleton; not the town, but the gloomy hills on which the town rests and which were here before the town was built. There is

> '. . . *neither daylight*
> *Investing form with lucid stillness*
> *Turning shadow into transient beauty*
> *With slow rotation suggesting permanence. . . .*
>
> *. . . nor darkness to purify the soul . . .*'

—as we had known at the still point which we had left, where the rotation did suggest permanence. Here we find

'. . . only a flicker
Of the strained time-ridden faces
Distracted from distraction by distraction
Filled with fancies. . . .

Descend lower. . . .'

This is not just political poetry intended as criticism of society, but a contemporary description of hell, reminiscent of Dante's and Dostoiewsky's. Man taken out of history,

. . . whirled by the cold wind
That blows before and after time. . . .'

He is called to the still point where the dance is, and heaven and damnation. This must be understood, the still point is: now, 'and all is always now'. Now is the only time, the rest is timeless.

'Sudden in a shaft of sunlight
Even while the dust moves
There rises the hidden laughter
Of children in the foliage
Quick now, here, now, always—
Ridiculous the waste sad time
Stretching before and after.'

The second quartet begins with an intonation which reminds us of what was said before about the doubtful nature of time and translates the conclusions into historical life.

'In my beginning is my end. . . .'

Again, as in the first movement of 'Burnt Norton', our senses are being prepared to accept what they have forgotten or suppressed for so long. The scene is very simple, an almost identical one has been described to me by peasants in the Eastern Carpathians. Suddenly music can be heard in an open field—

'Of the weak pipe and the little drum
And see them dancing around the bonfire
The association of man and woman
In daunsinge, signifying matrimonie—
A dignified and commodious sacrament.'

To my mind this scene and its implications are a very important part of the poem. Its similars will be found in almost every greater

works of art. That sudden carnival, the dance, the Walpurgisnacht, signifying the unity between spirit and man and beast, and the eternal birthgiving to the new spring in the circle of the years, when the dead return to life in the living, and the living leave with the dead.

'The time of the coupling of man and woman
And that of beasts. Feet rising and falling.
Eating and drinking. Dung and death.'

Where the action takes place is of no importance. An open field will do. Nor can the time be fixed. Eliot suggests 'On a summer midnight'. But that would mean to put in time what cannot take place in time. And so the second movement corrects further our old sense of time—

'What is the late November doing
With the disturbance of the spring
And creatures of the summer heat. . . .'

We are still watching, guided by the poet. Now constellations of stars roll around us. We have gone very far from the point from which we started, yet we have never left that point. The love of elements and stars is war.

'Scorpion fights against the Sun
Until the Sun and Moon go down
Comets weep and Leonids fly
Hunt the heavens and the plains
Whirled in a vortex that shall bring
The world to that destructive fire
Which burns before the ice-cap reigns.'

The poet has attempted to burst through the last gates into final reality. 'The poetry does not matter' now. Indeed not. If it is failure it is an incomparably small one compared with the failure to grasp God. The poet returns. So little can be said—

'On the edge of a grimpen, where is no secure foothold,
And menaced by monsters, fancy lights,
Risking enchantment. Do not let me hear
Of the wisdom of old men, but rather of their folly. . . .'

God cannot be grasped by the means of the intellect:

'The only wisdom we can hope to acquire
Is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless.'

He returns into the dark.

. . . dark the Sun and Moon, and the Almanach de Gotha
And the Stock Exchange Gazette, the Directory of Directors,
And cold the sense and lost the motive of action.'

We have been guided a long way. From the gloomy hills into the darkness of Death. We have learned what the façade was worth and have seen behind the faces. We have come to know landscapes other than those our eyes have known, and we have learned of a greater reality than that of the intellect. There is no hope other than:

'*Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought.*
So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing'.

We have seen the poet performing his greatest action, which can only be understood as an attempt without reward. In 'The Dry Salvages' once more we return to the world as we know it, and to men who dare the path that is as near to death as to life, where death is really no end, just as life cannot be taken as a beginning; a world of matter, rock and river, a world which we in our in-between existence of abstractions and machines choose to forget. The river and the god are one. Only were the identical rhythm of spirit and matter coincides with the rhythm of our existence, there happens a moment of reality, a *refugium* in time, hardly ever realized when it occurs, but mostly remembered.

His rhythm was present in the nursery bedroom,
In the rank ailanthus of the April dooryard,
In the smell of grapes on the autumn table,
And the evening circle in the winter gaslight.

When Eliot says that 'the river is within us', he seems to suggest man as a vessel of the divine spirit, and at the same time he reminds us 'of earlier and other creation' in the countries under the waters, and there are hints of a very humble relationship between

'*The starfish, the hermit crab, the whale's backbone . . .*
. . . the broken oar
And the gear of foreign dead men .

We have again left the familiar façades we have come to accept as reality. We are in the world and yet not in the world. We have only left the shore for the sea. The realm of salt and fog, where there is only the time of waves and sea voices, where our time of chronometers does not apply any more; nor that

. . . time counted by anxious worried women .

Being outside of time, the voyager is outside time's destiny. His becomes a destiny without fathoming and without destination. 'There is no end, but addition.' His distress will know no prayer of words—only the motionless prayer of the bone 'to Death its God'. To come near reality: there is only the way of humility or the sudden illumination.

> '*. . . But to apprehend*
> *The point of intersection of the timeless*
> *With time, is an occupation for the saint.*'

For most, when the unknown breaks into a superficial security—and that always by means of suffering—there are only superstitions helping to face the little reality they have to bear against their wish.

> '*To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits . . .*
>
> *. . . or dissect*
> *The recurrent image into pre-conscious terrors—*
> *To explore the womb, or tomb, or dreams; all these are usual*
> *pastimes and drugs, and features of the press:*
> *And always will be, some of them especially*
> *When there is distress of nations and perplexity*
> *Whether on the shores of Asia, or in the Edgware Road.*'

What has happened was not a re-valuation but a de-valuation of values. With the help of certain mechanical and superstitious devices we have only succeeded in clouding even more the real issues and connections of our existence, which is essentially one of suffering. Suffering is the only glory we know, and there is no other contentment but that—

> '*. . . our temporal reversion nourish*
> (*Not too far from the yew-tree*)
> *The life of significant soil*'.

If we have been able to follow the poet on his journey, and have understood the implications of what we have seen and experienced, we will first find our hands empty, our hearts bare. Life is an existence mainly of suffering, leading into death. In death only can we expect to nourish the soil. Gone is the cunningly constructed history of tea leaves, holiday red and political melodrama. But something new has realized itself in us. We are, transfigured, ready to enter our own season. We have come to move in a strange landscape with an ease of one who has long been acquainted. How unreal

seems the dated time of nativity, crucifixion and resurrection. The intersection of the timeless moment reveals itself to us in the timeless action of nature.

'*Midwinter spring is its own season . . .*

. . . glow more intense than blaze of branch, or brazier,
Stirs the dumb spirit: no wind, but pentecostal fire
in the dark time of the year. . . .
. . . There is no earth smell
Or smell of living thing . . .
. . . neither budding nor fading,
Not in the scheme of generation. . . .'

History has no real meaning and no purpose, or has a meaning and a purpose that is '. . . beyond the end you figured'. Only when the timeless intersects with history can meaning and purpose be understood. When our actions lose meaning and purpose ('Sin is Behovely, but/All shall be well . . .') we enter the divine. *Where* the still point is and *when* it takes place does not matter. For the poet:

'*. . . the nearest, in place and time,*
Now and in England.'

The world of the living and of the dead matter is atomized. The air we breathe is in the dust of a wall and of a mouse; under the water the dead sand, flood 'over the eyes and in the mouth'. Not only ourselves but the whole world undergoes a change into something infinitely bare, infinitely illuminated.

'*Water and fire succeed*
The town. . . .
Water and fire shall rot
The marred foundations we forgot,
Of sanctuary and choir.'

The 'creatures of the summer heat' were only signs to prepare for the meeting to come which will culminate in speech. We have found no permanence or substance in the things we took for real. We are now in search for greater reality.

'*I caught the sudden look of some dead master . . .*
And he a face still forming; yet the words sufficed
To compel the recognition they preceded.'

There follows conversation between the poet and the dead master. History and experience based on our senses come to nothing 'As body and soul begin to fall asunder'. Between 'Attachment to self and to things and to persons' and detachment from them there is indifference. Deliverance from both.

'. . . History may be servitude,
History may be freedom. See, now they vanish . . .
. . . To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern . . .
. . . Where you must move in measure, like a dancer. . . .'

To apprehend the intersection of the eternal with the temporal, we must give up everything and return to the beginning. Every moment is the moment of death, 'And any action/Is a step to the block, to the fire, down the sea's throat'. End and beginning are one in the illumination of the spirit, when the values are tested for acceptance or damnation.

'A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well. . . .'

FRED MARNAU

COMPETITION

The number of votes received was disappointing both in quantity and indication of a definite preference. We have decided, therefore, to continue our offer for the present issue. If the votes received during this quarter for the best poem in the four numbers this year, including this one, show a clear majority the prizes will be awarded in accordance with it. If not the decision will rest with an editorial committee. In the meantime contributors to this issue become eligible.

REVIEWS

G. S. FRASER, *Home Town Elegy* (PL, 6s.); CHARLES WILLIAMS, *Region of the Summer Stars* (PL, 6s.); EDWARD THOMPSON, 100 *Poems* (O.U.P., 6s).

Fraser is one of the poets whose existence has been known to everybody, whose published work was frequently very impressive, and whom it was hard to get into perspective for lack of a sufficiently large collection. This is not his first collection (the publishers should know better than to say so), but it is the first of sufficient size to show his quality. It is a perplexing book. Fraser's own sincerity is disarming, but it cannot disguise his faults. He combines a most moving occasional dignity (unforgettable in his poem on the drowned children in *The White Horseman*) with a capacity for arid didactic cleverness and a sort of inept vertiginous rhetoric which is more tiresome than the most tiresome Empson or Allott. One has to face these contradictions, and the irregularity of the form and matter: work that reads like Henley, lush poeticism and startling aridity, skill that occasionally overreaches itself alternating with almost fantastic gaucherie.

The result of this inequality is that the volume selects heavily, and the poems selected are almost all old poems. There can be little doubt, in spite of the notorious slowness of PL, that the irregular work is unrevised work, produced under the stress of fighting. The most memorable things in the book I can remember from 1941–2: 'O Death, old Captain . . . Birthday Greeting, 'The age piles up its ash, our worlds/are smoke that swirls in acridness.' . . . Beauty, excellent in bone and blood.' In *Rostov* the full dignity of which Fraser is capable is realized. This is one of the outstanding poems that are remembered, that ought to be remembered. He has never bettered it, even in his poem to Yeats. Pieces of fourth-form poetry—'A bird flies and I gum it to the concept'—and of Alfred Austinism—

> *Sad, we are silent. Sometimes one word lingers*
> *A brittle bridge, where soul to soul may speak.*
> *The sky is stained, the charm unique . . .*

—creep on him whenever he is writing without being fully roused. There are two poets, Fraser awake and Fraser asleep.

Williams has written another section of his Logres epic. It is in the manner of Pound, but inevitably it invites comparison with

Tennyson, and one cannot sincerely feel, by that standard of comparison, that technical achievement has not deteriorated, however much one may criticize Tennysonian ideas. Aiming to be monumental, and possessing no narrative gift, Williams contrives to be ponderous and ineffably dull. The poetry is ossified. One does not find a peak like Fraser's *Rostov*, and one does not expect it. Added to this dulness there is Williams's tendency to inflict upon his language the most exquisite tortures:

> *'. . . it was held, then as now,*
> *by those few who, in Britain, study the matter of the marches*
> *that there the divine science and the grand art,*
> *if at all below the third heaven, know*
> *their correspondence, and live in a new style—*
> *many a mile of distance goes to the making', etc., etc.*

This passage is not only at once pedantic and ungrammatical, precious and gauche—it is without meaning, a wilderness of distorted words and structures, like a blown bridge. To pursue symbolic ideas through such a warren of jargon is not within my powers, nor Mr. Williams's.

The hundred poems by Thompson fall into a different category, the category of the more successful Binyon or of Edward Thomas. Looking back on the poetry of the 1920's, one can begin to see the figures which stand out at all from the general press of Georgianism. I suppose critics in twenty years will find the same difficulty in sifting the work of this war, with its dense poetic undergrowth, the thirty or forty half-read books that Fortune's, for example, have published. Thompson is one of those who does stand out. The canker of poeticism has not succeeded in spoiling all his work. The mass of achievement has dignity, and there are about a dozen genuinely memorable poems, more than many of the new poetic thicket will ever produce, even if they go on writing for so long:

> *'Why should I shrink from life*
> *Who have seen death's face?*
> *How should I, if I would,*
> *For fear find place?'*

If that is not our own diction, and after twenty years of war, how could it be? it at least commands respect, in spite of the archaisms and 'bunnies'.

ALEX COMFORT

HERBERT READ, *A World Within a War* (Faber & Faber, 6s.)

Walled between two wars is the empty space, the stony yard where we did not know what to do, the world turning for twenty years, time and world revolving on the potter's wheel. There was a pause while we watched to see what form the clay would finally take: a bowl for fruit or an urn for ashes. It was to be an urn for ashes. Another war in the century of wars. Exhausted by heat and blood we have been sleeping like boar and bear for the third of a man's lifetime. Now once more we are half awake and look about us. For whom? For the Lady of the hunters? For the wounded God?

> *'The branches break. The beaters*
> *Are moving in: lie still my loves*
> *Like deer. . . .'*

This is the poetry of a scholar, a man's whose experiences and thoughts pass through a mind trained to differentiate and to sift; a poetry of a white and clear light whose bareness at times is almost painful to the unsteady eye. It is difficult not to think of the silvery sharpness of healing instruments and at the same time not to feel the warmth of a brotherly spirit ready to admire even our small acts of bravery, full of innocence and most stubbornly foolish. He turns with a saluting smile from the Conscript of 1940, and quixotic Herschel Grynsban, 'the beautiful assassin', is his friend, and his

> *'. . . saints were often silly men*
> *Fond of wine and loose with women'*,

for even

> *'When they rose to holy stature*
> *They kept the whims of human nature'.*

There is not much grace in our doings, we tumble in foggy autumnal years, crushed by the overtowering Two Wars—what other glory can we know but the fiery gesture of the assassin, of the lonely partisan, the aristocratic outlaw; the immense glory in the humble act of forgiveness? And even the dead children's faces, little harlequins:

> *'. . . laid out in ranks*
> *like paper lanterns that have fallen*
> *after a night of riot . . .'*

cannot be imagined now but in an act of forgiveness. No one is more sorrowfully drawn to these empty shells that will not flower

or bear fruit, yet he puts a smile over their torn faces, just enough to take away that utmost horror; for it is not for children to bear the brutal stigmata of violent death. His contemporary eye sees Death who like

'The Arab made a rose a rosette
to prove himself a fool'.

For it is

'In measure and in marksmanship
lies the exactitude of death'.

The deadly ornament, the sign of repression, in whose name life is extinguished, imagination destroyed and grace denied; 'a rigid frame/restricts the limbs that once ran free/across the hearth across the fields . . ./

'An ancient road winds through the wood
The wood is dark: a chancel where the mind
Sways in terror of the formal foe'.

We do not even wait for death to use his forceful tools. We live already in the sign of the ready-made, the barren, the fixed: under the glassbowl *now*, breathing the sticky air with pale lungs, our souls shattered by a painful lust to hurt, half-heartedly wicked, hypocritically good, there is no other division any more but one of conceit, vulgar and maddening. It is not the poet's work that makes these lines sound rhetorical:

'There is grace to still the blood
Of those who take the daring path:

There is grace that fills the dying eye
With pity for the wielder of the axe'.

And that blunt warning:

'Death is no pain for desperate men'.

How far all this is from Herbert Read's most moving conception of 'God's festival', so gloriously reminiscent of Goethe's conception in his Roman Elegies. It is the circle which he who is ready may freely enter and leave; where the 'design' is nature's growth, life a gay flower and death the falling of petals.

There is a sharp, sometimes harsh, and most masterfully controlled rhythm modulating both thought and syntax which to my mind achieves its height in a high song of joy:

'The golden lemon is not made
but grows on a green tree:
A strong man and his crystal eyes
is a man born free .

These lines are a miraculous achievement, as each single word is loaded with a minor thunder rolling victoriously through one's mind as often as one repeats them. Many have called their poems songs. Some were song-like. It is the scholar who is not 'only' a poet who gave his time one of the few songs worth remembering and singing.

There are seventeen poems, some in several movements, contained in this book. With what I have said, I know, I have hardly touched the scope and implications of the poet's work. I have said little of the achievements peculiar to Mr. Read, nor have I compared his work with that of his contemporaries. He is a poet who often goes far beyond what one can easily discuss. I doubt whether it can be discussed or re-told at all, except by the poet, even if one were quite capable to follow him to the end, for words would fail where the poet is still articulate. To understand poetry like that of Mr. Read fully is a privilege, intimate and lonely, and difficult to share. The poet receives his knowledge and his word from God:

'In a free hour
I walk through the woods with God . . .
In that peace
Mind looks into a mirror poised
Above body: sees in perspective
Guts, bones and glands: the make of a man.
Out of that labyrinth
The man emerges. . . .

His nature is God's nature: but torn
How torn. . . .

. . . the pattern once perceived and held
Is then viable: in good gait and going
In fine song and singular sign: in all
God's festival of perfect form .

This, the third movement in the title poem is perhaps the wisest in this selection; the most elegant and yet most moving: Felix Transitus. Here the feeling reveals itself in spite of the very controlled craftsmanship and we see the poet.

FRED MARNAU

LAURENCE WHISTLER, *Who Live in Unity* (William Heinemann, Ltd., 5s. net); LYNETTE ROBERTS, *Poems* (Faber & Faber, Ltd., 6s. net).

Laurence Whistler has now been writing and publishing books of verses since 1932, and *Who Live in Unity* proves him clearly to possess a poetic mind. By this last epithet I do not imply that he sees the legion phenomena of life in the pink of an eternal pastoral, or that he suffers from the euphuistic itch which will not allow a writer to call a lamp-post a lamp-post, a rifle a rifle, and a spade a spade. What, rather, I do mean is that the possessor of a poetic mind is one who feels an air of significance and excitement blowing through the reaches of his days; hears undertones and overtones in the spoken word; sees quotidian trivias and etceteras bathed in true illumination, portending a potential heaven and hell in this our mortal 'here and now'.

But poetic feelings and poetry are in no wise to be confused. It is true that the latter originates in the former, but the first therefore precedes it and is a condition of mind, while the second is a structure of art. It is here that many poets have gone on the rocks, mistaking the report of an incident which on the plane of living excited their feelings for the excited recreation of that incident (which is art). This was the charge which Baudelaire levelled against Alfred de Musset, and in recent days which D. S. Savage, in his book *The Personal Principle*, argues against D. H. Lawrence.

Now Mr. Whistler can write a fine poetic phrase, a fine verse-line, sometimes a fine stanza; and a poet who has accomplished this much can, with consideration and discipline, achieve a good if not a great poem. Very often, however, the poems of Laurence Whistler are like fine juicy apples with one small blemish in them. The concentrated building of language-form and music-making suddenly breaks down; the verse goes soft and the diction loses its durability and melody.

It is certainly not from want of poetic feeling that these occasional flawings came about. It is rather, as I suggested, that the poet recalls the incident which acted as origin of the poem. Now the nine pieces in this book form a sequence of amatory composition, and so it comes about that the poet finds everything in the incident, connected with his lady, supremely and satisfactorily poetic. He fails to comprehend the need for transformation, and so relates all things as they occurred, substituting a kind of poetic reportage of sentiment for the poem proper. This method is only too easy to adopt, and D. H. Lawrence saw it as so intrinsically natural and right that he

devoted a preface to the defence of it in one of his own books of verse. And when the poem is of an amatory nature the temptation is greater still, for the poet checking his poem by his experience finds them to be identical, since the images of the one are intimately associated with the happenings of the other. The reader, however, has no such referendum; he cannot compare the poem with an experience; charge the verses by a process of memory from the accumulator of original sensation.

Yet when all this is said and written much remains to be enjoyed in Laurence Whistler: such images as 'the long carved scroll of hair', and 'the picture-book of selves'; such statements of appreciation as 'He wore her like a flower' and 'The marvellous antipodes of sex', and such lines as:

> '*He followed music to the urn of silence*
> *Into which music plunges. . . .*'

and,

> '*Sometimes when night was pastoral, and they*
> *Were tuned to its vibrato candlelight*
> *As to a low recorder*',

and the ouverture to one of the poems in which the poet's lady sits before her mirror:

> '*Now, surely, love is easy to construe—*
> *Now, surely, the queer grammar is resolved,*
> *The mood imperative, the meaning stark . . .*'

In her first book of verse Lynette Roberts has served us up with a pudding constituted of at least three ingredients; and very different ingredients, too. In fact, when eating this dish it sometimes seems as if three puddings had all been made separately then placed on the same plate and their differences disguised. For example, the poetess experiments with rhythm. In her 'Note on Legend and Form', at the back of the book, she tells us that in one poem she has attempted to apply 'the strict form of the Welsh englyn to the English language'; in another that she is indebted to a Greek metre and Professor George Thomson's analysis 'of the third and extended line of the sapphic stanzas'; and in a third that she has essayed 'to revive an echo of the rhythm and syntax' of Caedmon's *Genesis*. In addition to these hireling children she also presents us with her own sturdy, charming and natural offspring of free-verse.

The subject-matter is likewise different. There are Welsh scenes, South American landscapes, and poems of a personal content.

This all makes for interesting diversity; hardens the task of getting a hold.

Of these thirty-four poems I prefer 'Poem from Llanybri' and 'Earthbound'. Both of these are written in free-verse form, as natural in their modulation as some chance colloquial phrase, yet with their images distinct and distinguished when compared with the blurred pictures presented in the course of common speech. From the first I quote:

> '*If you come my way that is*
> *Between now and then, I will offer you*
> *A fist full of rock-cress fresh from the bank*
> *The valley tips of garlic red with dew*
> *Cooler than shallots, a breath you can swank*
>
> *In the village when you come.*

and from the second:

> '*We walked the grieving room alone,*
> *Saw him lying in his upholstered box*
> *Violet ribbon carefully crossed,*
> *And about his sides bunches of wild thyme.*
> *No one stirred as we offered the gift. No one*
> *drank there again.*'

In certain verses nouns and adjectives seem pressed so tightly together that the melody of the line is sabotaged and we get a corn-beef kind of imagery:

> '*In plate green meadow sheepdog and farmer brood*
> *On galvanized tin.*

Sometimes this takes on a Hopkinsesque tint.

> '*Prim-pied under sky full of fresh livelihood.*

There are also other poems which in their curt abbreviations, rush-hour syntax, images out of the ferro-concrete age, and use of technical and abstract terms suggest the influence of Keidrych Rhys. This, however, might be pure coincidence.

DEREK STANFORD

Revue Fontaine, Nos. 29-33.

Already the first hints have reached us in this country of a great renascence in the poetry of France, clearly revealed in the form of Aragon's 'Crève-Cœur' volume and Eluard's 'Poésie et Vérité'. Nowhere, however, is the great variety and individuality of contemporary French poets so clearly seen as in the pages of the *Revue Fontaine*, copies of which are reaching us from Algiers. The recent issues of this fine monthly review bring to poetry readers some of the purest and best work produced by the poets of France since 1940.

The array of distinguished names is formidable: Pierre Emmanuel, Aragon, Claude Roy, Supervielle and Clancier, to name only a few. And the themes are as diverse as the poets represented. The sorrow of exile naturally comes first, then comes the spiritual faith in the revival of the motherland. Side by side with these contemporary schemes are the age-old themes of love and birth and death, of nature and of friendship. Sorrow and humiliation have given birth to a new simplicity and direct fire at once clearer and deeper than the too-intellectual poetry of France before the war. These writers, without in any way compromising themselves as artists, are giving the world a truly popular work.

Especially with Pierre Emmanuel we find a complete rejection of all literary affectations, and his austere and limped interpretations of contemporary scenes and events against the vast background of biblical symbolism had a terrifying strength. Unlike the surrealists, Emmanuel does not entirely suppress punctuation, but by reducing it to an absolute minimum achieves a remarkable unity and coherence in the most difficult passages. Occasionally through the darkness a ray of hope will break:

> *. . . Ainsi quand semblent mortes*
> *les vertus du vieux sol*
> *un jeune arbre en sa force*
> *les délivre en un fol . . .*

Emmanuel, who has developed very quickly, is probably the greatest French poet outside France, as Eluard is certainly the greatest inside.

In Aragon's 'France Ecoute' the montage of mythological and historical imagery upon the present is even more bewildering; the most innocent observations take from their context a profound significance:

'. . . C'est l'écho redoublé du sanglant autrefois
Jean d'Arc y tressaille à de nouvelles voix . . .'

Claude Roy is very well represented in recent issues. The form of his work is always elegant and pure, but his manner varies very considerably with varying themes. It seems usual for critics to insist upon the influence of Supervielle over Claude Roy, but this does not prevent the latter from sounding a very individual note. Theme and manner unite perfectly: his love poems are intimate and tender, the poems touching upon exile and loss are grave and sombre. It is a long time since we had in our own English poetry such sensuous richness:

'. . . Mon doux œillet tiède et serré
mon beau bouquet d'ombre et de chair . . .'

Or such moving images:

'. . . je tends vers vous mes mains mes doigts tremblants et gourds
mes mains que trop de morts disputent aux vivants. . . .'

Love, too, is the chief subject of G. E. Clancier's 'Domaine de l'Homme' poems. His work is very fresh and spontaneous; his mood less clouded by contemporary problems.

From America *Fontaine* receives a plaquette of poems by Jean Wahl, the philosopher, actually written during his year of imprisonment in Drancy prison-camp. These poems, all brief and poignant epigrammes, are a revelation. They are bitter with a bitterness that refuses to be forgotten.

And yet beneath all the bitterness and despair surges up the hope of the spirit indomitable:

'. . . Et s'ils faisaient un jour ma dernière toilette
Ils trouvaient changé mon corps mais non mon cœur. . . .'

Survival after death is the subject of Jules Supervielle's 'Le Mort en Peine.' He gives great power to his interpretation and the whole poem is a masterpiece in the 'grand manner':

'. . . Aveugle sans bâton et sans face et sans foi
Je cherche un corps, celui que j'avais autrefois. . . .'

This very brief review can do no more than hint at the fine work achieved by the poets of France. Let us hope that thoughtful readers will give an attentive ear to the messages they bring.

ALEC SMITH